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REPORT
OF THE
Illinois
Centennial Commission



TO THE
Forty-ninth General Assembly

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SCHNEFF & BARNES, STATE PRINTERS
SPRINGFIELD, ILL.
1915

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APR 4 1916

To the Members of the Senate and House of Representatives, Forty-ninth General Assembly, State of Illinois.

GENTLEMEN: The Illinois Centennial Commission was created in accordance with the provisions of a joint resolution adopted by the Forty-eighth General Assembly. The purpose of the commission, as set forth in the resolution creating it, is to make preparation for the proper observance of the one hundredth anniversary of the admission of Illinois into the Union.

That this centennial anniversary should be fittingly commemorated is recognized by every patriotic citizen of the State. The occasion offers a most excellent opportunity to show the wonderful development that has been made in our commonwealth during its hundred years of progress.

The commission as originally constituted consisted of the following members:

State Senators: Campbell S. Hearn, Logan Hay, Kent E. Keller, Hugh S. Magill, Jr., Henry W. Johnson.

Members of the House of Representatives: John S. Burns, John Huston, C. C. Pervier, J. F. Morris, George B. Baker.

President E. J. James, Prof. E. B. Greene, Prof. J. W. Garner of the University of Illinois, and,

Dr. Otto L. Schmidt and Mrs. Jessie Palmer Weber of the Illinois State Historical Society.

The commission first met on July 23, 1913, and organized by the election of Senator Campbell S. Hearn as president, and Mrs. Jessie Palmer Weber as secretary.

Senator Campbell S. Hearn of the Thirty-sixth Senatorial District, who introduced into the Forty-eighth General Assembly the resolution for the creation of the commission, died at his home in Quincy, Ill., August 28, 1914. This commission is indebted to Senator Hearn not only for the legislation under which it was organized, but for much valuable advice and counsel. He gave to it unselfish labor and devotion, and the name of Campbell S. Hearn will be forever connected with whatever this commission accomplishes. He would ask no greater reward or memorial than that he be remembered in connection with the work to which he gave so much thought and labor.

When, by reason of sickness, Senator Hearn was unable to attend the meetings, Honorable Hugh S. Magill, Jr., was elected president *pro tempore*, and on December 3, 1914, was elected president of the commission.

GENERAL PLANS FOR THE CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

After a very careful consideration of the whole subject by the commission, it was decided that the celebration should be planned under the following heads:

First—State Wide Celebration.

Second—Celebration at State Capitol.

Third—Centennial Memorial Building.

Fourth—Centennial Memorial Publications.

Fifth—Historical Statues and Markings.

It was also determined that there should be a Committee on Publicity. Special committees for each of these departments of the work were organized as follows:

- (1) Committee on State Wide Celebrations—
 Senator Kent E. Keller, Chairman; members, Prof. Garner,
 Senator Johnson, Representatives Burns, Huston and
 Pervier, and Mrs. Jessie Palmer Weber.
- (2) Committee on Celebration at State Capitol—
 Senator Hugh S. Magill, Jr., Chairman.
 Chairman for Dedicatory Progress—President E. J. James.
 Chairman for Historical Pageant—Mrs. Jessie Palmer
 Weber.
 Chairman for Centennial Exposition—Senator Logan Hay.
 (a) Agriculture—Representative Pervier.
 (b) Livestock—Representative Huston.
 (c) Mining—Representative Morris.
 (d) Manufacturers—Representative Baker.
 (e) Transportation—Senator Johnson.
 (f) Education—State Superintendent Blair.
 (g) Arts and Sciences—Professor Garner.
 (h) Historical Relics—Mrs. Jessie Palmer Weber.
- (3) Committee on Centennial Memorial Building—
 Senator Logan Hay, Chairman; members, Senator Keller
 and Representatives Burns, Baker and Morris.
- (4) Committee on Centennial Memorial Publications—
 Dr. O. L. Schmidt, Chairman; members, Representative
 Baker, President James, and Professors Greene and
 Garner.
- (5) Committee on Statues and Historical Markings—
 Professor Evarts B. Greene, Chairman; members, Senators
 Magill and Johnson, Representative Huston and Dr.
 Schmidt.
- (6) Committee on Publicity—
 Representative John S. Burns, Chairman; members, State
 Superintendent Blair, Senators Magill and Keller, Repre-
 sentative Morris and Dr. O. L. Schmidt.

THE CELEBRATION THROUGHOUT THE STATE.

The Committee on the State Wide Celebrations, of which Senator Kent E. Keller is chairman, has been actively at work. It has sent out letters to all county superintendents of schools for the purpose of obtaining a list of all the teachers of the State in the hope of securing

their cooperation in the work of the commission. It has attempted to interest the press, the clergy and the schools, and has written and sent out many hundreds of personal letters to individuals. It has asked advice and suggestions from all classes of citizens, as well as cooperation from them in the work of the commission. The committee believes that one of the best methods of arousing and sustaining interest in the Centennial Celebration is by the formation of associations in each county in the State, and in larger centers to be called Centennial Associations. This has been done in several localities with good results, and the plan is to be elaborated and extended. It is hoped that each county, city, town and village, church and school in the State will have its own centennial celebration, the whole to culminate in the great celebration, exposition and historical pageant at Springfield, and the Committee on the State Wide Celebration is doing its best to encourage and stimulate interest in and plans of this nature. Localities are being urged to celebrate local historical events and anniversaries and to procure and preserve in permanent form the recollections and reminiscences of its older men and women.

THE GREAT CELEBRATION AT SPRINGFIELD.

The details of the celebration at the State Capitol have not all been worked out, but it is intended to make this feature of the centennial of great historical importance. It is planned to have a Centennial Exposition displaying the agricultural and manufacturing progress of the State, together with its varied resources; also an Historical Pageant, setting forth graphically and with artistic beauty the wonderful development that has been attained in a hundred years of progress. President Edmund J. James of the University of Illinois, Chairman of the Committee on Dedicatory Program at Springfield, has formulated a tentative plan which, when worked out, will furnish one of the principal features of the centennial observance. It is hoped that this feature can be made of world wide interest and that other states and nations will participate in it.

CENTENNIAL MEMORIAL BUILDING.

The General Assembly has already taken cognizance of the need of additional room at the State Capitol and a commission has been appointed to take the preliminary steps looking to the erection of an Educational Building. The Centennial Commission has felt that this building might also serve the purpose of being a Centennial Memorial, commemorating in permanent form the one hundredth anniversary of Illinois' statehood. Such a building could contain all the features that have been planned for it from the standpoint of the State's needs, and also be a suitable memorial, providing for the historical collection of the State, its archives and other collateral interests.

CENTENNIAL MEMORIAL PUBLICATIONS.

The Committee on Centennial Memorial Publications, of which Dr. O. L. Schmidt is chairman, has been up to this time the most active of the committees of the commission, and has with the advice and consent of the Governor and the entire commission, already made plans for the compiling and editing of a comprehensive centennial memorial

history of Illinois, to consist of six volumes, to be written or compiled by competent, trained historical writers, the first volume a separate publication to be entitled, "Illinois in 1818." This volume is to be edited by Dr. Solon J. Buck and will be the first published. It will embrace an account of social, economic and political conditions at the close of the territorial period; of the organization of the State and its admission into the Union.

The other five volumes are to be a series of volumes relating to the different periods of the State's history. This series will be under the general editorship of Prof. C. W. Alvord of the University of Illinois, whose work on the Illinois State Historical Collections has gained for him a reputation second to none. Several other authors or editors have been secured to edit volumes for which their ability and experience has made them peculiarly fitted. The several volumes have the following titles:

Volume I. Province and Territory, 1673-1818.

Volume II. The Frontier State, 1818-1848.

Volume III. The Era of Transition, 1848-1878.

Volume IV. The Industrial State, 1870-1893.

Volume V. The Modern Commonwealth, 1893-1918.

These volumes it is expected will be written in a narrative style which will be attractive to the general reader, but there will be foot notes and bibliographical apparatus which will make them valuable for the use of scholars.

The cost of the publication of the Centennial Memorial Historical Series has been estimated to be thirty-four thousand dollars (\$34,000), and the commission will ask of this General Assembly (the Forty-ninth) one-half of this sum, seventeen thousand dollars (\$17,000) and the Fiftieth General Assembly will be asked to make the necessary appropriation of seventeen thousand dollars (\$17,000) to complete the work.

HISTORICAL STATUES AND MARKINGS.

In the opinion of the Committee on Historical Statues and Markings, in which the commission concurs, it is not thought desirable to provide for a large number of statues or monuments at this time. To some extent it may be possible for particular counties or cities to recognize in the centennial year men who have been especially associated with such localities. The commission desires, however, to give its cordial endorsement and support to the plans inaugurated by the Forty-eighth General Assembly, and now being carried on by the State Art Commission for the erection of statues in commemoration of Lincoln and Douglas on the Capitol grounds. We would further suggest the desirability of making preparations at this time for a monument or tablet especially recognizing the services of Nathaniel Pope, territorial delegate in Congress at the time of the admission of Illinois to the Union, to whom the chief credit for the passage of the enabling act in its final form is due.

WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLICITY.

The Committee on Publicity, of which Hon. John S. Burns is chairman, is one of the most important committees of the commission

and has worked untiringly to bring before the people of the State the fact that the centennial is approaching and that it must be celebrated in a manner befitting the occasion and the State of Illinois. The press of this and other states has accepted with great and generous interest the information furnished by this committee and has generally recommended and advanced editorially and locally the plans of the commission, especially with regard to the proposed Centennial Memorial Building and the Centennial Historical Publications.

NECESSITY FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION.

In 1818 Illinois was a frontier territory, but its geographical position, its soil, its water-course and its rapidly growing population destined it to become a very important factor in the life of the Union. In its tremendous development during its 100 years of statehood Illinois has more than justified the hopes and prophecies of its statesmen and citizens. Ohio was the first of the states of the old northwest territory to complete its first century of statehood. It failed to observe its centennial in an adequate way. This has been greatly regretted by many of its citizens. Indiana will next year, 1916, observe its centennial, and efforts are being made to make the celebration a notable one, but it now appears that it will be unable to carry out the splendid plans which have been made for a great celebration because her citizens did not begin the movement in time. Illinois should take warning from the mistakes of her sister states and leave nothing undone to insure a complete and well planned celebration of its centennial in 1918.

The resolution creating this commission carried with it an appropriation of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for preliminary work for the first two years. It is believed that this amount has been wisely and economically expended, and the commission is asking the present General Assembly to appropriate a like sum at least for its work during the next biennial period.

Respectfully submitted,

THE ILLINOIS CENTENNIAL COMMISSION.

HUGH S. MAGILL, *Jr.,
President.
JESSIE PALMER WEBER,
Secretary.

JOHN S. BURNS,
LOGAN HAY,
JOHN HUSTON,
GEORGE B. BAKER,
CLAYTON C. PERVIER,
OTTO L. SCHMIDT,
HENRY W. JOHNSON,
JAMES F. MORRIS,
KENT E. KELLER,
EDMUND J. JAMES,
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